

REPORT  
ON  
NATIVE PAPERS  
FOR THE  
Week ending the 14th February 1891.

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URIYA PAPERS.

Nil.

ASSAM PAPERS.

Nil.

LIST OF NEWSPAPERS.

No.	Names of newspapers.	Place of publication.	Reported number of subscribers.	Dates of papers received and examined for the week.
BENGALI.				
Fortnightly.				
1	"Ahammadi" ... ..	Tangail, Mymensingh	450	1st fortnight of Magh, 1297 B. S. 27th January 1891.
2	"Hitakari" ... ..	Kushtea	30	
3	"Kasipore Nibási" ... ..	Kasipore, Burrisal	.....	
4	"Navamihir" ... ..	Ghatail, Mymensingh	.....	
5	"Sahayogi" ... ..	Burrisal	.....	
6	"Uluberia Darpan" ... ..	Uluberia	.....	
Weekly.				
7	"Bangavási" ... ..	Calcutta	20,000	7th February 1891.
8	"Banganibási" ... ..	Ditto	.....	6th ditto.
9	"Burdwán Sanjivani" ... ..	Burdwan	302	3rd ditto.
10	"Cháruvartá" ... ..	Sherepore, Mymensingh	500	3rd ditto.
11	"Dacca Prakásh" ... ..	Dacca	1,200	8th ditto.
12	"Education Gazette" ... ..	Hooghly	885	6th ditto.
13	"Gramvási" ... ..	Ramkristopore, Howrah	800	9th ditto.
14	"Hindu Ranjiká" ... ..	Beauleah, Rajshahye...	300	
15	"Murshidábád Pratinidhi" ... ..	Berhampore	.....	
16	"Navayuga" ... ..	Calcutta	"	
17	"Pratikár" ... ..	Berhampore	600	6th ditto.
18	"Rungpore Dikprakásh" ... ..	Kakinia, Rungpore	.....	
19	"Sahachar" ... ..	Calcutta	500	4th ditto.
20	"Sakti" ... ..	Dacca	.....	3rd ditto.
21	"Samáj-o-Sáhitya" ... ..	Garibpore, Nuddea	.....	
22	"Samaya" ... ..	Calcutta	3,806	6th ditto.
23	"Sanjivani" ... ..	Ditto	4,000	7th ditto.
24	"Sansodhini" ... ..	Chittagong	.....	
25	"Saráswat Patra" ... ..	Dacca	300	8th ditto.
26	"Som Prakásh" ... ..	Calcutta	1,000	9th ditto.
27	"Sudhákar" ... ..	Ditto	2,580	6th ditto.
28	"Sulabh Samáchar" ... ..	Ditto	.....	7th ditto.
29	"Surabhi-o-Patáká" ... ..	Ditto	700	23rd January and 6th February 1891.
Daily.				
30	"Banga Vidyá Prakáshiká" ... ..	Calcutta	500	7th, 9th and 10th February 1891.
31	"Bengal Exchange Gazette" ... ..	Ditto	.....	6th to 9th and 11th and 12th February 1891.
32	"Dainik o Samáchar Chandriká" ... ..	Ditto	1,500	8th to 12th February 1891.
33	"Samvád Prabhákar" ... ..	Ditto	800	6th and 7th and 9th to 12th February 1891.
34	"Samvád Purnachandrodaya" ... ..	Ditto	300	6th and 7th and 9th to 12th February 1891.



No.	Names of newspapers.	Place of publication	Reported number of subscribers.	Dates of papers received and examined for the week.
<b>ENGLISH AND BENGALI.</b>				
<i>Weekly.</i>				
35	"Dacca Gazette" ... ..	Dacca ...	.....	
<b>HINDI.</b>				
<i>Monthly.</i>				
36	"Darjeeling Mission ke Māsik Samāchār Patrika."	Darjeeling ...	20	
37	"Kshatriya Patrikā" ... ..	Patna ...	200	
<i>Weekly.</i>				
38	"Aryāvarta" ... ..	Calcutta ...	800	7th February 1891.
39	"Behar Bandhu" ... ..	Bankipore ...	.....	
40	"Bhārat Mitra" ... ..	Calcutta ...	1,653	5th ditto.
41	"Champarun Chandrika" ... ..	Bettiah ...	.....	
42	"Desī Vyāpārī" ... ..	Calcutta ...	.....	
43	"Hindi Bangabāsī" ... ..	Ditto ...	.....	2nd ditto.
44	"Sār Sudhānidhi" ... ..	Ditto ...	500	
45	"Uchit Baktā" ... ..	Ditto ...	4,500	
<b>PERSIAN.</b>				
<i>Weekly.</i>				
46	"Jāum-Jahānomah" ... ..	Calcutta ...	250	
<b>URDU.</b>				
<i>Weekly.</i>				
47	"Aftal Alum Arrah" ... ..	Arrah ...	300	
48	"Al Punch" ... ..	Bankipore ...	.....	
49	"Anis" ... ..	Patna ...	.....	
50	"Calcutta Punch" ... ..	Calcutta ...	.....	
51	"Gauhur" ... ..	Ditto ...	196	
52	"Raisul-Akhbari-Moorshidabad"	Murshidabad ...	.....	1st February 1891.
53	"Urdu Guide and Darussaltanat"	Calcutta ...	340	6th ditto.
<b>URIYA.</b>				
<i>Monthly.</i>				
54	"Asha" ... ..	Cuttack ...	.....	
55	"Pradīp" ... ..	Ditto ...	.....	
56	"Samyabadi" ... ..	Ditto ...	.....	
57	"Taraka and Subhavartā" ... ..	Ditto ...	.....	
<i>Weekly.</i>				
58	"Dipaka" ... ..	Cuttack ...	.....	
59	"Samvad Vāhika" ... ..	Balasore ...	205	
60	"Urya and Navasamvād" ... ..	Ditto ...	600	
61	"Utkal Dīpikā" ... ..	Cuttack ...	444	
<b>PAPERS PUBLISHED IN ASSAM.</b>				
<b>BENGALI.</b>				
<i>Fortnightly.</i>				
62	"Paridarshak" ... ..	Sylhet ...	450	
63	"Silchar" ... ..	Silchar ...	500	
<i>Weekly.</i>				
64	"Srihatta.Mihir" ... ..	Sylhet ...	.....	3rd February 1891.





## II.—HOME ADMINISTRATION.

## (b)—Working of the Courts.

The *Urdu Guide and Darussaltanat*, of the 6th February, says that a European Magistrate of Gya, who has a very rough temper, is giving great trouble to the people of that place.

URDU GUIDE AND  
DARUSSALTANAT,  
Feb. 6th, 1891.

2. The *Bengal Exchange Gazette*, of the 11th February, says that every sort of oppression has reached its climax under British rule.

BENGAL EXCHANGE,  
GAZETTE,  
Feb. 11th, 1891.

Court peons. Fearing lest there should not be money enough to fill the pockets of Englishmen, the English Government employs low, ignorant and unscrupulous men on small salaries to do all sorts of work. The court peons are among such employés. The English Government sells justice, and people are, therefore, often ruined in conducting even petty cases. And there is over and above this, oppression by the court peons who do nothing, not even their legitimate work, if they do not get money at every step. Complaints against them in the courts on this account avail nothing, and people are compelled to pay them money. Every officer in the law courts established in this country by the English is corrupt, and the English-made laws are so rigorous that men are obliged to sell their domestic utensils in order to find money for conducting suits in self-defence.

## (d)—Education.

3. The *Surabhi-o-Patáká*, of the 23rd January, recommends that the Calcutta Art School, the majority of whose students are Bengalis, should be located at some place in the native quarter, say Pataldanga or Bowbazar, which will not be very far from the English quarter.

SURABHI-O-PATAKA,  
Jan. 23rd, 1891

4. A correspondent of the *Burdwan Sanjivani*, of the 3rd February, says that the students of minor schools are taught both by a master and a pandit, and both are taken to task by the secretary of the District Board if the results of their schools at the Minor Scholarship Examination are bad. One of these two men is thus often unjustly blamed for the negligence of the other. This can be rectified by furnishing each of these schools, or such of them as may make the request, with a statement showing in what subjects the candidates sent up therefrom have been plucked. The educational authorities are requested to attend to this grievance of the poor teachers of minor schools.

BURDWAN SANJIVANI,  
Feb. 3rd, 1891.

5. The *Sanjivani*, of the 7th February, says that people have fairly split their sides laughing over the outlandish Bengali of the gentleman who set the Bengali passage for translation into English at the last Entrance Examination. Mr. Tawney, who set that paper, has the reputation of a Sanskrit scholar. Such Bengali as “শুগল বড় গ্রাহক,” “সংস্কৃত ভাবে চলিয়া যাইতেছে,” “বস্ত্র পুটলি করিয়া,” “লাঠিতে বোলাইয়া” “তিত্বের পক্ষী একটা পালকের ন্যায় হৃদয়ভারে” “ঠিক পুরোভাগে,” “পোষ মানার মত বসিয়া রহিয়াছে” “বলিয়া উঠিল” and “দিয়ে” could be written only by an Englishman.

SANJIVANI,  
Feb. 7th, 1891.

6. The *Som Prakash*, of the 9th February, thus criticises the papers set at the last Entrance Examination:—

SOM PRAKASH,  
Feb. 9th, 1891.

The papers at the last Entrance Examination. The paper setting a passage for translation from Bengali into English was printed in old-style type not used at present, and contained several misprints. The style of the second passage in that paper was very bad. The Sanskrit paper this year was much better than last year's. But the English passage set for translation into Sanskrit was rather stiff. The paper also contained several misprints. The paper setting passages for translation from English into Bengali was not bad. But of the three passages contained in it, only the first was suited to Entrance candidates, and the second was too easy. The last passage was taken from the Bible. Could the framer of the paper find no other books from which to set passages for translation?

For the last few years the University question papers have been found to contain misprints. But the examination rules of the University are so strict



that no one is allowed to set the candidates right in the matter of misprints. The University cannot, therefore, be too careful in printing its question papers.

(e)—*Local Self-Government and Municipal Administration.*

CHARUVARTA,  
Feb. 3rd, 1891.

7. The *Cháruvartá*, of the 3rd February, says that, now that their next budget will shortly come up for discussion, the Commissioners of the Nasirabad Municipality in the Mymensingh district should fix an increased pay for their Town Hall Librarian. The pay of the present incumbent is Rs. 10 a month, a very inadequate remuneration for a competent man. If the Municipality can see its way to increase the present allowance of Rs. 3 made by it for the registration of births and deaths to Rs. 5, and supplement the Librarian's pay now met from the Town Hall Fund by that sum, the arrangement will prove satisfactory. But in view of the daily increase of municipal work, it will be best for the Municipality to fix the salary of the post slightly above Rs. 15, and appoint to it a man who should be able to do the work of Clerk, Librarian, and Registrar of births and deaths. But whether the suggestion is adopted or not, it is clear that it has become necessary to make better arrangements for the Town Hall Library, or there will be a falling off in its income.

SANJIVANI,  
Feb. 7th, 1891.

8. The *Sanjivani*, of the 7th February, referring to the refusal of the Bengal Government to do anything in the matter of the non-election of Babu Akshaychandra Das as a Commissioner of the Howrah Municipality, in consequence of the efforts made by the Magistrate of Howrah to prevent his election, remarks that the Municipal Act should be so amended as to provide a remedy against such illegal and despotic acts on the part of the Magistrate. To remedy the injustice done to Akshay Babu by the Magistrate, Government should appoint him as a nominated Commissioner.

SOM PRAKASH,  
Feb. 9th, 1891.

9. A correspondent of the *Som Prakash*, of the 9th February, says that the alleged order of the authorities that the Santipore Municipality should bear the expenses of the census operations in the Santipore town strikes at the very root of self-government. It is not at all proper that Government should take forcibly and without the consent of the Municipal Commissioners the proceeds of rates which are realised from poor rate-payers by the distraint and sale of their wretched clothing and domestic utensils. Is Sir Charles Elliott opposed to self-government?

(g)—*Railways and Communication, including Canals and Irrigation.*

SAMAY,  
Feb. 6th, 1891.

10. A correspondent of the *Samay*, of the 6th February, says that he lately saw with his own eyes a highly respectable native lady break her leg in getting down from a train at the Galsi station on account of there being no platform at that station. What will the Railway Company say to this?

SANJIVANI,  
Feb. 7th, 1891.

11. The *Sanjivani*, of the 7th February, publishes a letter received from the inhabitants of Panitras near Howrah, in which the villagers protest against the proposal made by the Assistant Engineer of Panskura to remove the embankment along the Rupnarayan from the Berhampore bridge to Kantapukur to an average distance of two miles from the river. Protests have been made against this proposal to the Assistant Engineer, Engineer, and Chief Engineer, but to no purpose; and the villagers now look to Sir Charles Elliott for help. If he does not help them, ten thousand people will be washed off the face of the earth in the next rains.

(h)—*General.*

BENGAL EXCHANGE  
GAZETTE,  
Feb. 6th, 1891.

12. The *Bengal Exchange Gazette*, of the 6th February, says that the Indian administrative system is gradually becoming more and more dirty, so much so that it will after some time become a fearful despotism, surpassing even the tyranny of Seraj-ud-dowlah. Already there are signs that this will be the case. The Excise Department constitutes a glaring instance in point. It is a common



remark that Government is more anxious to ruin the people of the country by making them use *ganja*, liquor, and other intoxicating substances than to give them education and make them men. This is a blind policy for the Government to follow. Thanks to this policy, drunkards and *ganja* smokers are now found in every village. Liquor may now almost be said to be an article which is hawked about in the streets. There is scarcely a village which does not count among its inhabitants half-a-dozen men who use intoxicating substances. Most families are now about to be ruined from this cause. The village has now ceased to be the abode of charming simplicity and broad and sweet sympathy it once was. Government is quite indifferent in this matter, and is filling its exchequer and supporting Englishmen by its ceaseless traffic in intoxicating substances, which is bringing ruin and desolation upon individuals, families and villages. New and different kinds of liquor are imported every year from England, and if the quantity of such imports in any year is small, Government feels great regret and disappointment, and endeavours to give such a stimulus to the imports that the following year may more than make good the loss. The English have now begun to lay hands even on the clothing which the people wear. Many have brought themselves so completely under the influence of intoxicants that they do not hesitate even to pawn their clothing in order that they may procure liquor and intoxicate themselves with the money thus raised. This is no exaggeration. Under no other Government does such a state of things exist. There are under all other Governments special laws for regulating these matters. That the case is otherwise in this unfortunate country is because the Government has become hostile to the people. It seems to be Government's earnest wish to bring about a decadence in the condition of the people.

### III.—LEGISLATIVE.

13. The *Surabhi-o-Patáká*, of the 23rd January, has the following on the Age of Consent Bill:—

The Age of Consent Bill.

SURABHI-O-PATAKA,  
Jan. 23rd, 1891.

"We have no objection to the Bill on religious grounds. It should nevertheless be stated that Hindu society will be stirred to its depths by the passing of this Bill. The chief objection of that society to the Bill is that it will strike at the root of the marriage customs of the Hindus. Those who entertain such a fear and are yet in favour of social reform recommend a middle course. They say that, instead of fixing any definite age for cohabitation, Government should rule that the husband who cohabits with his wife before the first occurrence of menses should be punished. Such a law will be in conformity with the *shastras* instead of conflicting therewith, for the *shastras* strictly prohibit cohabitation before the first occurrence of menses. And, speaking for ourselves, we can say that if Government is bent upon passing a law on the subject of cohabitation, it should frame that law on the lines here suggested.

In the Indian Penal Code rape is considered as an offence second only to murder. The result of the proposed law will, therefore, be that the husband, who asserts his right to his wife when she is not above 12, will be transported or sentenced to imprisonment for a term which may extend to 10 years, and must also pay a fine. One shudders even to contemplate this! And this punishment will be inflicted for an act which was never recognised as a crime, and which is even regarded by the Hindus, or at any rate by many among them, as a religious duty enjoined in their *shastras*. Could anything be more unnatural and inhuman than this? Sir Romesh Chunder has very rightly said that the penal law of no nation in the world stigmatises as rape the husband's cohabitation with his wife, no matter under what circumstances. But, unfortunately for India, what is not to be found in any other country is to be found in it.

As regards Mr. Nulkar's contention that there would have been no objection if the age of consent had been originally fixed in the Penal Code even at 14, it should be considered that the provision in the Penal Code relating to the age of consent has remained a dead letter, and that one wrong cannot be justified by another. The most important consideration, however, is that there is great difference between a girl of 10 and a girl of 12, in spite of Sir Andrew Scoble's dictum that the difference appears only from a "ruffian's point of view." Was Government influenced by ruffianly feelings when it first fixed the age of consent at 10, and thus, to quote the words of a correspondent of ours, authorised girls of 12 (*sic*) to feed the flame of lust in men?



That we object to this Bill is not because we support early marriage or our present practice. We do not approve of cohabitation even with girls of 12; but we consider legislation for social reform a mistake. If a foreign Government is once allowed to interfere with any social custom, there is no knowing where it will stop.

The present Bill threatens to produce a violent reaction in opinion against early marriage in Hindu society. The preparations for social reform that have been made during the last 25 years are about to be destroyed by the over-zealousness of impatient and hotheaded reformers and inexperienced foreigners. It will be well if Government now quietly withdraws the Bill.

RAIS-UL-AKBAR,  
Feb. 1st, 1891.

14. The *Rais-ul-Akhbar*, of the 1st February, referring to the Age of Consent Bill, observes that the Government's right to legislate does not extend to matters religious.

HINDI BANGAVASI,  
Feb. 2nd, 1891.

15. The *Hindi Bangavasi*, of the 2nd February, says that no legislative measure previous to the Age of Consent Bill was so strongly protested against, because no other law affected the people's religion.

That Government is going to pass the Age of Consent Bill is because it does not clearly see that it will interfere with the Hindu religion. If it clearly sees this, it will be unable to pass the Bill.

Those who have advised Government to pass the Age of Consent Bill are only its pretended friends, and their real object in giving such advice is to excite the people against the Government.

Government should not pass in a hurry the Age of Consent Bill which has created such sensation throughout India.

BURDWAN SANJIVANI,  
Feb. 3rd, 1891.

16. The *Burdwan Sanjivani*, of the 3rd February, says that, if Government is resolved to make a law on the subject of cohabitation, it should make some amendments in the present Bill. It should be provided that a husband should not be liable to punishment if he cohabits with the consent of his wife before the completion of her 12th year if she has menstruated. If this is done, the object of the Bill will be attained without interfering with the religious beliefs and practices of the Hindus. It should also be provided that the wife herself or her guardian must be the complainant in cases under the proposed law.

SAKTI,  
Feb. 3rd, 1891.

17. In giving an account of a public meeting held at Dacca on the 1st February last to protest against the Age of Consent Bill, the *Sakti*, of the 3rd February, reports Syud Gholam Mustapha, one of the Mahomedan speakers, as saying—"This law will be an interference with society and it will destroy people's *ijjut*. The poor inoffensive Hindus may obey this law if they like, but if the police or the doctor enters our Mussulman zenanas, we will cut off their heads. Do we prefer our life to our honour?" Garib Hossein Saheb also spoke in support of the motion. Yusuf Jan Miya, the brother-in-law of Nawab Ahsanulla, protested against the motion, and said that "there can be no harm in marrying girls after twelve, &c." And as soon as the pleader Osmanuddin Saheb rose to point out his error, Yusuf Jan Miya left the meeting with three or four others. Osmanuddin Saheb said that "this law will interfere with the social practices of those Mussulmans among whom early marriage is in vogue, and will destroy people's *ijjut*. What a rigorous law! One is cohabiting with one's own wife, and any traveller in the street bringing a charge of rape against him and getting him punished! And this, when in a case of adultery none but the husband can institute the complaint! And if the husband of an adulterous wife lives elsewhere, and the offender dies within three or four years, the latter goes scot-free. But if a person cohabits with his own wife, anybody and everybody will be able to lodge a complaint against him and get him transported for life!"

SAKTI

18. A correspondent of the same paper, Muhammad Anis Khan, writing from the Dacca Madrassa, says that it would be a mistake to think that the proposed law for raising the age of consent will injuriously affect only the religious and social observances of the Hindus and not those of the Mahomedans. Although the Mussulman scriptures are opposed to early marriage, still early marriage largely prevails among middle and low class Mussulmans. The evil effects of early marriage, such as loss of health, weak physique, and bodily



injuries, are not noticed among the Mussulmans, because the parents and guardians of Mussulman girls do not allow them to sleep with their husbands before they have attained their puberty. As a matter of fact, excessive sexual intercourse is more injurious to health than early marriage. Why else should the children of grown-up parents be so often found to be weak? If the husband and wife are carefully selected, early marriage produces good and not evil. Early marriage is more favourable to the development of the conjugal feeling and the preservation of sexual morality than late marriage. Now, what is the age at which, according to the Mussulman scriptures, Mussulman girls attain their majority? According to the deceased Hazrat Maulana Keramat Ali, girls attain their majority at their ninth year, that is to say, they begin to menstruate at that age, as also before or after that age. But for a girl to menstruate before her ninth year is almost an impossibility. Who shall say that a girl who has had her menses is unfit to cohabit with her husband? And it is written in the *Hadis* that parents have three duties to discharge towards their children, namely, (1) when a child is born it is their duty to give it a good name, (2) it is their duty to teach the child the *Koran* and the *Hadis*, and (3) when the child attains his or her majority it is their duty to marry him or her to a good girl or boy. And if, owing to their failure to do any one of these three duties, the children go astray or commit any sin, the parents too incur that sin and may have to go to hell in consequence. It is difficult to see how, if the proposed law is passed, Mussulman parents will find it possible to discharge the last-mentioned duty. If parents do not marry the girls who have attained their majority, and if, in consequence of this, the girls feel annoyed and go astray, the parents will be responsible for their sin. If, therefore, the proposed law is passed, there will be violence done to Islam. It is written in the scriptures, that a girl should be given in marriage as soon as she becomes *bálak* (menstruates). But how will that be possible if this rigorous law is enforced? Of course, there will be nothing to prevent her marriage, but she will not be allowed to cohabit with her husband before her twelfth year. How fearful this! Hindu as well as Mussulman girls in this country become mothers of at least one child before their twelfth year. Every one should, therefore, calmly consider what sad consequences will result if this Bill is passed into law. In that case, husband and wife, being denied each other's company, will go astray and bring disgrace upon their families. There will be hundreds of cases of infanticide and foeticide, hundreds of cases in which pure and spotless families will be defiled and disgraced, and chaste and virtuous women will give themselves up to libertinism. In short, the only effect of the passing of the Bill will be an increase of crime and falsehood.

SAHACHAR,  
Feb. 4th, 1891.

19. The *Sahachar*, of the 4th February, says that there are differences of opinion on the question of the justice of raising the age of consent. The opinion of the majority in

The Age of Consent Bill.

Bengal is against such a law; but taking all India into consideration, the weight of opinion is on its side. Government will not under these circumstances withdraw the Bill. But if all India had unanimously protested against the Bill, it would still have been passed into law. The Queen's own opinion and public opinion in England being what they are, Government could not act otherwise than it has done. So far as has been known, the opinion of the women of this country is also in favour of raising the age of consent.

But there is no difference of opinion on one point, namely, that the Bill will lead to police oppression. The police will not, of course, take cognisance of offences against the proposed law. But who is there to restrain the Magistrates? Many therefore recommend, like the writer, that complaints under this law must be made on oath by a near relative. Respectable Hindus and Mussulmans, it is true, do not now marry their daughters before they are 12 or 13, but the lower classes are compelled, on pain of excommunication by the punchayets, who exercise great influence over them, to marry their daughters between 7 and 9. This is a serious difficulty. There is also another difficulty. Will any parent prosecute an offending son-in-law, knowing what the penalty provided by the law is? The Hindu marriage tie is an indissoluble one. Suppose, then, a husband is transported or sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment for violating the law, what will become of the wife? The law should be such as can be obeyed. The writer, therefore, repeats his proposal that the maximum penalty for premature



cohabitation should not exceed two years' imprisonment. Any heavier punishment will do harm instead of good, and will, in fact, ruin the very women for whose benefit the law is intended. The number of widows in the country is already very large, and it would be a very mischievous thing to add to it by legislation (for the wives of husbands punished under the law will be widows to by all practical intents and purposes).

NAVAYUGA  
Feb. 5th, 1891.

20. The *Navayuga*, of the 5th February, says that Dr. R. C. Chandra is Dr. R. C. Chandra on premar- wrong in saying that girls in this country cry  
ture cohabitation. bitterly when they go to their fathers-in-law's  
houses after marriage, and feel glad to return therefrom to their fathers' houses, because their husbands forcibly cohabit with them. Dr. Chandra must have forgotten all Hindu ways and habits by his early conversion to Christianity and his prolonged residence in England, or he would not have made so curious a statement. Did he never see even a mother of two or three children cry when going to her husband's house? And does he not know that a girl does not cry in fear when her husband visits her in her father's house?

BHARAT MITRA,  
Feb. 5th, 1891.

21. The *Bhārat Mitra*, of the 5th February, says that the Age of Consent Bill strikes at the root of Hindu society and the Hindu religion. The Bill will not protect those for whose benefit it is framed; it will rather deprive them of all protection in the prime of their youth by sending their husbands to jail. If the Hindu idea that a girl under 12 is capable of cohabitation is a wrong one, it ought to be corrected by education and not by legislation.

URDU GUIDE AND  
DARUSSALTANAT,  
Feb. 6th, 1891.

22. The *Urdu Guide and Darussaltanat*, of the 6th February, says that the Age of Consent Bill should not be passed in a hurry, and that its provisions, and especially those relating to the punishment, should be carefully considered. Suppose a husband whose wife, though under 12, has become capable of cohabitation and is at her father's house, and suppose further that he is invited to his father-in-law's house, it will be difficult for him to restrain himself, and so the invitation will prove a snare to him.

BANGANIVASI,  
Feb. 6th, 1891.

The Age of Consent Bill.

23. The *Banganivási*, of the 6th February, has the following on the Age of Consent Bill:—

A law so bad as that which makes the cohabitation of a husband with his wife rape is not to be found in any country. Rape is cohabitation with a woman against her consent, even though no hurt may be inflicted in the course of such cohabitation. The punishment inflicted upon Hari Maiti was not a punishment for rape under section 375 of the Indian Penal Code. He was punished under another section of that Code. But though the offence committed by Hari Maiti was not rape, Government is taking advantage of his case to make the law of rape severer than it is at present. Is this proper? It is like applying the drug to the leg in order to cure a pain in the arm. It is like pouring water into a tank in order to put out a fire in a house. Phulmani met her death from an accident, and the Legislature is making a law for transporting or imprisoning a husband for cohabiting with a wife who is capable of cohabitation!

A law so cruel and so unreasonable as this does not and cannot exist in any other country. A law which will peep into a married couple's bedroom and make holes and openings in the windows in order to enable the Magistrate too to look into it, is possible only in this unfortunate country. The very proposal for making such a law in a free country, and among a free people, would produce rebellion. That it was possible to make a provision in the Penal Code fixing an age of consent for married girls is because the Indians have always been a very unfortunate and inoffensive people. And it is also on that account that it has been possible to bring forward the present proposal for making the consent law still more severe. We had a talk on this subject the other day with an English friend of ours, who defiantly said, "we will not tolerate in our country a law which will invade the sanctity of our bed-room." These proud words of the Englishman made us bend our head down, and we muttered: "Alas! this disgraceful law is going to be passed in our country only because we are a subject people and because we are a very base nation. There are among us men so shameless that they would have the sword of the law hang over them in their bed-rooms, and would have their bed-rooms watched by policemen."



In introducing his Age of Consent Bill in the Council, Sir Andrew Scoble spoke as follows:—

“But for my part, I shall be content if the effect of legislation be mainly educative—if it strengthens the hands of fathers of families for the protection of their daughters, and modifies the custom, so as to diminish the opportunities and incentives which are now afforded for indulgence in this pernicious practice.”

It is clear from these words of the Law Member that the object of the Bill is not simply to punish, but also to educate. Yes, we are a nation of savages and Government wants to educate us by making laws for us. Yes, we are strangers to the domestic virtues, we gave up only the other day our habit of dwelling in woods, and so our English instructors want to teach us the domestic virtues by means of laws. Yes, we are a savage people and we do not know how a husband should behave to his wife, and a wife to her husband. Yes, we tattooed our bodies till yesterday, and we had not the marriage tie among us till very recently, and so our instructors, this Government from Albion, wants to teach us the duties of married life. Yes, we are a savage people, and we tie helpless girls with iron chains to the feet of their husbands who forthwith begin cohabiting with them like wild beasts!

This talk about educating the people brings the smile on our face even in the midst of this fear and anxiety. We have learnt much and we are still learning much from Englishmen. And we shall always remain grateful to them for this. We have received from them instruction of various kinds, and the proposed law too has not been without instruction for us. It has taught us that the beggar who gets a throne, and the savage who becomes slightly civilised, are so inflated with vanity as to think themselves greatest among men. That Englishmen, who began to live only the other day, whose society is not yet well organised, and who have still to find a religious purpose in their lives, should seek to teach the most ancient nation in the world, the nation, that is, which has been the educator of the world in the domestic virtues, is owing only to their inordinate pride and our own misfortune.

We supplicate the Government with folded hands:—“Have mercy on us, O masters! Do not, on the representation of our enemies, take us for a nation of savages, and do not pass this Age of Consent Bill for our education. We have been forced to learn from you much that is good and much that is bad, and unfortunately for us the bad things we have learnt greatly outweigh the good things. You have many good things to teach us. But we have not learnt those good things. We have only learnt to show disrespect to elders, to look without and not to look within, to gratify our desires in utter disregard of a hereafter, and to abandon ourselves to the pleasures of the world, utterly unmindful of the final end of human existence. Do not, after all this, seek to educate us by the proposed law. That law will teach the devoted wife that her husband commits an offence if he cohabits with her, and that she or her guardian can send him to jail or get him transported. It will teach her father that his son-in-law is not entitled to the privilege of cohabitation by reason of his having given him his daughter, and that he can punish him for cohabiting with his daughter against her consent. We say again, for Heaven's sake, save us from the infliction of this law.”

The Age of Consent Bill.

24. The *Sudhakar*, of the 6th February, makes following “important observations” on the Age of

SUDHAKAR,  
Feb. 6th, 1891.

Consent Bill:—

Many people think that the proposed law is objected to by the Hindus alone and not by the Mussulmans. And the support given to it by Nawab Khaja Ashanullah Khan Bahadur, and the partial support given to it by the National Mahomedan Association, have confirmed this belief. But everybody must admit that the opinion given by the Nawab cannot be accepted as the opinion of the Mussulman public in general. The Nawab is a big man, and he is not prepared to oppose the wishes of Government. Whatever his real feelings may be, he has concealed the truth from a sense of delicacy, or for the purpose of keeping his own influence with the authorities unimpaired. He is also wholly ignorant of the general condition of the country. The National Mahomedan Association too has given no formal or regular opinion on the subject. Three or four members of it have probably vaguely expressed their approval of the measure.



All wise and experienced Hindus and Mussulmans are opposed to this Bill. All Hindus, high and low, educated and ignorant, rich and poor, University graduates and pandits of *tols*, are strongly protesting against the Bill on the ground of religious interference. But the Mussulman community is silent and inactive. No member of that community takes any notice of the fact that Government is gradually interfering with his religious practices.

As, among the Hindus, the men, who have been to England, the Brahmos and the Babus full of the light of the new education, are in favour of the Bill, so there must be also a small number of men among the Mussulmans, coming under the same category, who support the Bill. They do not consider for a moment that interference even with a practice which is neither enjoined nor prohibited by religion is interference with religion. We have already stated that, if we do not protest against the proposed law, we cannot reasonably protest against the prevention of cow-slaughter.

We must also observe here that no one who is an alien in religion has the right to question the correctness of our notions about our own social and religious affairs. There is nothing recognised by Islam whose prevention is not an interference with that religion. All the rules of Islam are eternal and strictly binding. Thus the prevention of cohabitation before 12 will be an interference with our religion. And if Government is now allowed to pass the Age of Consent Bill, how shall we protest against a Bill to prevent polygamy, when one is introduced by Government? Who, again, can say that the age of consent, which is going to be raised from 10 to 12, will not gradually be raised from 12 to 14 and from 14 to 16? We would ask those Mussulmans who support this Bill whether they will also silently acquiesce in a Bill to prohibit polygamy and cow-slaughter. We cannot understand how those who would protest against those Bills are supporting the present Bill. The evil of early marriage and early cohabitation will disappear of itself. Is it right to make simple matters and specially delicate family affairs a subject of legislation?

SUDHAKAR,  
Feb. 6th, 1891.

25. The same paper says that Maulavi Abdus Sobhan, Marriage Registrar and Kazi of Netrakona in the district of Mymensingh, has given the following reply to the question, whether the Mahomedan religion lays down any definite age for marriage and cohabitation, and whether the fixing of such an age will interfere with that religion:—

The Mahomedan religion lays down no definite age for marriage and cohabitation. Marriage may take place at any age, although it is fitting and proper that it should take place after the attainment of puberty. A husband may cohabit with his wife as soon as she becomes capable of it, no matter whether she has menstruated or not. The fixing, therefore, of any definite age for marriage and cohabitation will interfere with Islam.

SURABHI-O-PATAKA,  
Feb. 6th, 1891.

26. The *Surabhi-o-Pataká*, of the 6th February, says that one of the chief objections against the Age of Consent Bill is that, if Government reforms society by means of the law, one cannot be sure where it will stop. And the Viceroy's statement that he is unable to entertain certain proposals in connection with the Hindu marriage system made by the English Committee because Indian society will be revolutionised by giving effect to them, will not fully reassure the men who are urging the above objection against the Bill. For there is no knowing how Government will act in regard to such questions when they will be again brought up before it. Who is to decide whether the Bill does or does not conflict with Hindu religious beliefs? One party says it does and another party says it does not, and Government has brought forward this Bill in the belief that it does not. But now that the cry has been raised all round that religion is in danger, will Government shut its eyes and say that all this agitation is false and spurious, or that it is determined to pass the law in spite of the religious objection?

SAMAY,  
Feb. 6th, 1891.

27. The *samay*, of the 6th February, has the following in connection with the Age of Consent Bill:—

The Shastras nowhere say that *garbhadhan* should be performed at the first menstruation. There are, on the contrary, a large number of texts showing that it should be postponed until the attainment of physical maturity. The ninth chapter of the Manu Sanhita contains a sloka according to which a girl



should rather remain unmarried all her life than be given to an unworthy husband; and in commenting on this, Medhatithi distinctly says that no girl should be given in marriage before she has commenced to menstruate [একথা তাঃ কণায়াঃ ন দানং স্বত্বদর্শনেহপি ন দানং যাবৎ গুণবান্ বরোন প্রাপ্তঃ]. Thus the most ancient and the most authoritative commentator of Manu was not in favour of early marriage, and Gobhila, who is a commentator on the Vedas, and is respected all over India, is of the same opinion. According to him a girl with heaving breasts is called a nagnika, and according to Manu it is such girls that should be given in marriage [if ত্রিশৎবর্ষেঃ বোড়শাদ্ব্যং ভাব্যং বিন্দেত নগ্নিকাঃ]. That Raghunandan was also of this opinion is clear from the passage quoted by him, meaning that, if a man of 20 cohabits with a girl of 16 at a time when the girl's womb and menses are free from defects, &c., the child that is born of the cohabitation is a good child. According to the Shastras, marriage should be celebrated before menstruation, but *garbhadhan* should be performed after that event, and the parents of girls incur the guilt of foeticide only when they keep them unmarried when they have commenced to menstruate. A text is quoted from Narada in support of this view. According to the Shastras, the blood which flows regularly month after month is called ritu (menses); and it must, therefore, be a mistake that the time for performing *garbhadhan* is when a girl begins to menstruate. Vishnu clearly says that *garbhadhan* should be performed when the womb (*garbha*) becomes *spashta*. Government is going to legislate for all India, and it ought not to drop the measure simply because the people of Bengal are protesting against it. As a matter of fact *garbhadhan* is not considered as a binding ceremony in this country. The Kulin Brahmins do not observe it. And why are people objecting to the Bill when the sin accruing from the non-observance of *garbhadhan* can be expiated so easily by eating the *panchamirta*?

28. The *Aryāvarta*, of the 7th February, says that Government lately prohibited the attendance of Government servants at the Congress, and now Sir Alfred Croft has forbidden the Pandits of the Sanskrit College to give any opinion on the Age of Consent question. This is like ordering the man who sees his house on fire before him to sit and look on.

ARYAVARTA,  
Feb. 7th, 1891.

The Age of Consent Bill.

29. The *Bangavasi*, of the 7th February, has the following on the Age of Consent Bill:—

BANGAVASI,  
Feb. 7th, 1891.

“We will ask Government a question in connection with this matter. It is going to abolish the *garbhadhan* ceremony for men's good. But the very men whose good they seek are crying for mercy. The Ilbert Bill too was introduced for men's good. But Government had to withdraw it at the growlings of a small number of rough Englishmen. And will Government force us too to become roughs? The Hindu marriage laws, it is said, will be translated into English, and Government will then decide upon the course it should take in this matter. If this be true, Government should be ashamed of itself. If it is ignorant of the marriage laws of the Hindus, it should, for very shame, withdraw its Bill. And if the *Shastras* are really to be translated, will Professor Tawney make the translation? It is said that the Bengali passage set for translation into English in this year's Entrance Examination was composed by Mr. Tawney. It contains the expression “শুগল বড় গ্রাহক ও দেবী পরবশ.” What that “গ্রাহক” means nobody can say. So, in translating the *Shastras*, “প্রজাপত্যে নমঃ” will probably be rendered, “Salutation to the butterfly.”

The kind Government is going to pass the Age of Consent Bill for the prevention of cruelty. But is it not cruelty in the Government to torment the entire population of a country by inflicting upon them such a law as this? Will not Government give up its resolution to ruin us even when so many Doctors and *Kavirajes* (native physicians) have explicitly declared that the *garbhadhan* ceremony causes no injury to girls? Oppression of the weak is no doubt bad. But it is Government itself that is going to commit such oppression. In order to prevent injury to the health of young wives and to their children, it wants to make a law under which a girl under 12 will be considered immature and mature as soon as she attains that age. Just fancy the consequences of such a law. A robust, healthy, and strong girl of 11 years 11 months and 29 days will be



considered immature, but a sickly, weak and undeveloped girl will be considered mature as soon as she enters upon her thirteenth year. The framers of the law alone can say how such an unnatural law will do anything but evil.

However proud the English may be of their civilisation, that civilisation is of a very inferior type in our eyes. We hate their adult marriage as a barbarous practice, and we must declare, even at the risk of exciting the anger of Government, that their conduct makes us suspect that their plea of cruelty to girls is only a pretext for forcing upon us their hateful marriage system.

The proposed law is being protested against not only by the Hindus, but also by wise Mussulmans of rank and position like Shums-ul-ulamah Sheikh Mahomed, who is the spiritual head of the whole Moghul community in this part of the country; by Prince Ferrok Shah, who is a lineal descendant of Tipoo Sultan; and by Syud Abdus Sobhan, the well known zemindar of Bogra and Mymensingh. We believe that the Deputy Magistrate, Syud Abdul Jubber, is also opposed to this Bill. We could name many other respectable opponents of the Bill among the Mussulmans; but it is needless to multiply names. Government ought to ascertain and publish the opinion of the Nawab of Murshedabad, of Nawab Abdul Luteef, and of the Maulavis of the chief Madrassas in this country on this question. The Mussulmans are also holding protest meetings in many places, and many Mussulmans are attending the protest meetings that are being held by the Hindus. If the common people of this country had heard of this law and known how to protest, serious disturbances would have by this time occurred in Bengal.

A curious question presents itself in connection with this Age of Consent Bill. Mr. Justice Trimbuck Telang and Professor Bhandarkar are, though in the service of Government, freely expressing their opinion on the Bill because they are in favour of it. But Government officers of equal position are unable to publish their opinion on the Bill because they are opposed to it. Sir Alfred Croft has stopped the mouths of the pundits of the Calcutta Sanskrit College. This is not just. Either all Government servants, no matter whether they are for or against the Bill, should be allowed to freely express their opinion, or no Government servant should be allowed to do so.

BANGAVASI,  
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30. Pandit Sasadhar Tarkachuramani thus disposes of, in the same paper, Government's interference with the question of Government's interference with Hindu religious practices. Hindu religious practices on previous occasions:—

“We firmly believe that this is the first time the Government is going to interfere with our religion, and that it did not, on any previous occasion, interfere with any religious practice of ours. The abolition of the three practices of *suttee*, throwing children into the sea, and piercing the body with hooks, in no way interfered with our religion. The throwing of children into the sea is not enjoined in the *shastras*; it was, in fact, a cruel superstition which was confined among low and ignorant people, and Government did its duty by abolishing it. The practice of *suttee* too was being latterly observed in a way which was not consistent with the *shastras*. The abolition of that practice was not, therefore, an interference with our religion.

Again, even if it be granted for argument's sake that the practice of throwing children into the sea is sanctioned in the *shastras*, it is clear that its abolition did not amount to an interference with religion, for it is only the prevention of a practice, the non-observance of which entails sin according to the *shastras*, that constitutes interference with religion. And throwing children into the sea, piercing the body with hooks, and *suttee* are not religious duties, the non-performance of which involves one in sin. The *shastras* may say that a woman sanctifies herself by burning herself on her husband's funeral pyre, but they do not say that failure to do this is a sin. The same can be said of the other two practices.

But supposing the Government interfered with our religious practices on previous occasions, it would be wrong to say that it will be, for that reason, justified in interfering with all our religious practices.

SANJIVANI,  
Feb. 7th, 1891.

31. The *Sanjivani*, of the 7th February, is informed that Sir Romesh Chunder Mitter will not object to the raising of the age of marriage to 12 by legislation. He thinks that early marriage and early cohabitation are very bad things. He is, therefore,

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prepared to abolish early marriage by legislation. The writer is further informed that Sir Romesh Chunder will propose in the Council the raising of the age of consent to 13 without, however, interfering with anybody's religious belief. The opponents of the Bill are acting very wrongly by not accepting the writer's proposal to ask Government to fix the first menstruation as the time for cohabitation. The adoption of this proposal will remove the objection on the score of religious interference, and it will at the same time check early cohabitation.

32. The same paper cannot understand why the retired Anglo-Indian Retired Anglo-Indians and the officers in England are condemning the Age of Consent Bill. If they fear that the Bill, if passed into law, will produce a rebellion, they must be pronounced to be extremely weak-minded men. One feels unwilling to think that they are men of such mean minds as is that of the Editor of the *Bengal Times*. That they are condemning the Bill is probably because they are old officers whose English hearts have undergone a sad change under the influence of the Indian climate. This is why they are so alarmed as to find a snake in a rope. Those who support this brutal oppression are unworthy of the English name, no matter what the reason of their support may be.

SANJIVANI,  
Feb. 7th, 1891.

33. A correspondent of the same paper, who is a Pandit, thus criticises Pandit Sasadhar Tarkachuramani's article on *garbhadhan*, published in the *Bangavasi* of the 24th January last:—

SANJIVANI.

Pandit Sasadhar has quoted the following sutra from Gobhila, viz., বদা ঋতুমতী তবতাপরত শোণিতা তদা নস্তবকালঃ to prove that *garbhadhan* should be performed at the first menstruation. But the sutra in question cannot be interpreted to mean that. It contains no reference either to *garbhadhan* or to the first menstruation, and means, when translated:—"When a girl commences to menstruate, and when her menstrual flow ceases, the time for begetting children comes." Raghunandan, who has quoted the sutra in his chapter on *garbhadhan*, has a note on it saying that the appearance of menses is the proper time for begetting children, and that a man should cohabit with his wife at that time. He makes no reference in that passage either to *garbhadhan* or to the first menstruation, and says in the next sentence that, as demerit accrues to the person who fails to observe the injunction, it should be regarded as a *niyama* (obligatory). But it may be argued here that, as cohabitation has been enjoined in all menses, it is also enjoined at the first menses, and as it is not proper to cohabit with a wife without performing *garbhadhan*, it follows that *garbhadhan* should be performed at the first menstruation. But if this had been the intention of Raghunandan, he would not have quoted the sloka in his *Jyotishtattwa*, according to which, if a man of 20 cohabits with a wife of 16 years of age at a time when her womb and menses are free from defects, good children are born of the cohabitation, while inferior children are born of cohabitation between husbands and wives of younger years. It is, therefore, clear that, according to Raghunandan, the 16th year is the proper time for performing *garbhadhan*.

Pandit Tarkachuramani has quoted a mantra from Bhabadev to the effect—O God Sun, take this arghya given on the occasion of the first occurrence of menses. But in this country the mantra in question is not generally read on that occasion, its place being taken by the ordinary mantra for offering the arghya to the sun, which, of course, contains no reference to the celebration of the first menses. The *Rigveda Karma Paddhati* by Kalsi simply enjoins the offering of the arghya to the sun in accordance with custom. This reference to the first menstruation contained in Bhabadev's work, unsupported as it is by other authorities, should not be taken as conclusively proving that *garbhadhan* should be performed at the first menstruation. Besides, as Raghunandan himself rejected many of the opinions of Bhabadev, his opinion on the subject under discussion should be accepted as authoritative.

Tarkachuramani has quoted a sloka from Yajnavalkya to prove that *garbhadhan* should be performed at the first menstruation. But the sloka which simply means that *garbhadhan* should be performed during menses [গর্ভাধানং ঋতৌ পুংসঃ সর্বনং স্পন্দনাং পুরা] cannot be interpreted to mean that. His quotation from Vishnu [গর্ভস্য স্পষ্টতা জ্ঞানে নিষেককর্ম] which means that *garbhadhan* should be performed when the womb "has attained full development,"



also fails to support his contention. The sloka of Sankhya, which has been quoted by him, means the same thing as Vishnu's text. The passage quoted by the Pandit from the Asvalayan Grihya Parisishta [অথর্কমত্যাঃ গ্ৰহীতাঃ প্রথমে ২ অঙ্কুলে ২ হ্রি] which means that *garbhadhan* should be performed during menses on the first auspicious day, &c.] also fails to prove that *garbhadhan* should be performed at the first menstruation. His reference to Susruta, who simply says that girls begin to menstruate from 12 or, according to the Pandit, from 11, does not prove that *garbhadhan* should be performed at 11 or 12. Susruta is clearly of opinion that *garbhadhan* should not be performed in the case of girls of tender years [see তন্ত্রাদিত্যবাল্যায়ঃ গর্ভাদানং ন কাম্যং. For this reason, no one should wish to perform *garbhadhan* in the case of a girl of very tender years].

DAINIK-O-SAMACHAR  
CHANDRIKA,  
Feb. 8th, 1891.

34. The *Dainik-o-Samachar Chandriká*, of the 8th February, thus continues its criticism on Mr. Justice Telang's letter on the Age of Consent Bill:—

According to Mr. Justice Telang, the sin of foeticide which, according to Parasara, is incurred by not observing the injunction relating to the performance of the sexual act during menses is nothing more than a legal fiction. No man incurs that sin who does not actually kill a foetus, says Mr. Telang. The man who calls himself a Hindu and yet interprets the Shastras in this unfair way is no Hindu at all, and it is sin for a true Hindu to argue with him. If Mr. Justice Telang's view that no one incurs the sin of foeticide who does not actually kill a foetus is adopted as correct, then such books as the Parasara Sanhita and the Prayaschitta Viveka, which deal with sins and their prayaschitta, may as well be consigned to the flames. Cohabitation during menses has for its object the begetting of a son, and he who does not cohabit with his wife while in her menses therefore prevents the birth of a son, and in that way incurs, in a manner, the sin of foeticide. The sin in question cannot therefore be viewed in the light of a legal fiction.

According to Mr. Telang, every Hindu is bound to obey the order of his rulers, and if the rulers command him not to cohabit with his wife before 12, he incurs no sin by not obeying the injunction of the Shastras on the point. Now Manu, in the seventh chapter of his Sanhita, treats of the duties of kings, of the sin which kings incur by preventing their subjects from practising the rites of their religion, and of the prayaschitta which they must perform for its expiation, and so on. And it is clear from the statement of a king's duties given in that chapter that the people of this country are not bound to obey those orders of their rulers that are opposed to their *dharma* and *dharma sastras*. The man who knows this and yet wants to make out that, according to the *sastras*, the Hindu subjects of non-Hindu rulers are bound to obey the "un-Hindu" orders of the latter is either a non-Hindu himself, or has very little insight into the Hindu *sastras*. Mr. Justice Telang says that, according to Manu, the conqueror of a country is bound to respect the "lawful customs" of its people, and as *garbhadhan* is not a lawful custom, Government is not bound to respect it. But, in the passage which Mr. Telang has in view, Manu asks the conqueror to worship the Gods and Brahmins, which means that Manu speaks of Hindu conquerors. Mr. Telang has therefore acted very foolishly by quoting Manu to prove his point. The very passage on which he relies as his authority for the statement that Government is not bound to respect *garbhadhan*, rightly interpreted, means that it is bound to respect that ceremony.

DAINIK-O-SAMACHAR  
CHANDRIKA,  
Feb. 9th, 1891.

Dr Rashbehari Ghose and the Age of Consent Bill. 35. The *Dainik-o-Samachar Chandriká*, of the 9th February, has the following in connection with the Age of Consent Bill:—

It is rumoured that the Hon'ble Dr. Rashbehari Ghose is in favour of the Bill, and as he has been asked by Government to give an opinion, he will probably support the Bill. Dr. Ghose is well versed in English law, but his opinion on a question connected with Hindu society and religion cannot, on that account, be accepted as authoritative. If a man can be considered competent to give opinions on all manner of subjects simply because he is a pleader of the High Court and a member of a Legislative Council, why should not the Hon'ble Mr. Allen, who too is a member of the Bengal Council and is Legal Remembrancer to Government, be thought fit to prepare a list of the articles which are required in a Danasagar Sradh? Government should not take the opinion of the Hon'ble Dr. Ghose in a question of this nature.



36. In reviewing the opinions which have been given for and against the

Opinions on the Bill.

Bill, the same paper observes as follows :—Those who are in favour of early marriage and want to see

marriage consummated at the first menstruation form the majority. The number of those who, though opposed to early marriage and to the consummation of marriage at the first menstruation, are yet opposed to the Bill from the fear that it will increase oppression, is also not inconsiderable. But the number of those who are crying for the proposed law without considering what the consequences of its enactment will be is very small. And the question arises, with whom should the Viceroy side? The Government ought to take the side of the majority. All the Commissioners and Collectors whom Government consulted in the matter said that no law was necessary, and many even of the medical men consulted by it are of the same opinion. Lord Lansdowne ought certainly to know by this time that the proposed law is unnecessary and that it will increase oppression. And this consideration leads the writer to hope that His Excellency will yet save Hindu society, and it is because he entertains this hope that he is still protesting against the measure. And the day he comes to know that Lord Lansdowne has resolved to pass the measure in spite of the opposition of Hindus and Mussulmans, and in spite of the advice of the Commissioners and Collectors, he will cease protesting, and make up his mind to suffer in silence the oppression, which will be committed by His Excellency. The Hindu is forbearing by nature, and it is because he is forbearing that he is so much oppressed.

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37. The same paper again refers to Mr. Justice Telang's statement that the demerit resulting from the non-observance of the injunction requiring the performance of the sexual

The Prayaschitta question.

act during menses may be expiated by the expenditure of two annas, and observes as follows:—

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No inference as to the character of a sin should be made from the amount of money which will procure absolution from it. To murder a Brahmin knowingly is considered a mahapataka (one of the five great sins), and yet it can be expiated by the expenditure of 25 kahans of cowries, equivalent to only  $6\frac{1}{2}$  rupees. The sin of killing a Brahmin through ignorance may be expiated by the expenditure of  $12\frac{1}{2}$  panas, equivalent to only rupees 3 and 2 annas. Similarly, the sins which are even more heinous than those which are called mahapatakas (great sins), such as the sin of cohabiting with mother and daughter, may be expiated by the expenditure of 200 kahans of cowries equivalent to only Rs. 50. Will Mr. Telang still say that sins of all kinds can be expiated by means of Prayaschittas? The statement that a man should commit sin simply because he has the power to perform Prayaschittas comes with a very bad grace indeed from the lips of a Hindu.

38. The *Dainik-o-Samachar Chandrika*, of the 10th February, is of opinion that the proposal for making puberty the age of consent does not meet the objection on the ground

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of police oppression which is being urged against the Bill. And if this proposal is given effect to, it will be necessary, in complaints under the proposed law, to enquire whether a girl has actually menstruated or not, and that enquiry will certainly be more difficult than an enquiry into age. If the law is honestly worked, if all the officials of Government conduct themselves with perfect rectitude, if false complaints cease to exist, and if party spirit, anger, envy and mutual animosity disappear from society, then, of course, nobody will have any cause for anxiety. But, unfortunately, earth is not Heaven, courts are not always repositories of justice, every judge is not "justice incarnate," and the police is fond of oppression. And that being the case, there will be oppression even if husbands are given the right of cohabiting with their wives after the first menstruation. Thus, as the proposal in question has no chance of improving the matter, many sensible men are for leaving the law on the subject as it now stands. And if any change in that law is considered necessary, it should be effected by removing the present liability of husbands to prosecution for rape for cohabiting with wives of 10 years of age. In England no man is thought capable of committing rape on his own wife, and why should the law on the subject be different in India?

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Lord Lansdowne ought to listen to the proposal that husbands should be given the right of cohabiting with their wives whenever the latter commence to



menstruate, and he should not allow himself to be guided by what the *Indian Daily News*, the *Pioneer*, and other Anglo-Indian papers, who wish the destruction of Hindu society, say in this matter. The *Pioneer's* statement that no proposal like the one noticed above will do, for it will be difficult to punish the violations under it, is then quoted and condemned. The *Pioneer* may hurt the feelings of 20 crores of Hindus, but his wounding their feelings is very different from Lord Lansdowne's wounding their feelings. Wounds caused by the *Pioneer* will not destroy the empire; wounds inflicted by the Governor-General may.

DAINIK-O-SAMACHAR  
CHANDRIKA,  
Feb. 11th, 1891.

39. The *Dainik-o-Samachar Chandrika*, of the 11th February, sharply attacks Mr. Manmohun Ghose's idea of marriage before menstruation as repugnant to the Hindu religion.

Mr. Ghose is not a Hindu, and that is why he has accepted Dr. Bhandarkar of Bombay as his authority in preference to Pandit Sasadhar Tarkachuramani of Bengal. The Hindu community must oppose Mr. Ghose's proposal as well as any effort that Government may make to abolish early marriage. Mr. Ghose, it should also be noted, is himself of opinion that Government can interfere with any social practice only when its interference is desired by those among whom the practice prevails, and there can be no doubt that Mr. Ghose knows that the Hindus do not wish Government to interfere with their custom of early marriage. Those who are opposed to early marriage have already got Act III of 1872, and whoever likes to join their ranks is free to do so. No new law for the abolition of early marriage is therefore needed.

A perusal of Mr. Ghose's note leads the writer to say that elected members in the Legislative Council will be a danger to the country. If election is granted, anglicised and un-Hindu men like Messrs. Nulkar and Ghose will surely find their way into the Legislative Council, and then the Hindu community will have less to hope for from that Council than they can hope for from the Council as at present constituted. The present Council may be, after all, moved by prayer and protest; but a Council full of Ghoses and Nulkars will be absolutely inexorable.

And an elected Council will also prevent appeals to the Home authorities against objectionable laws. For the Home authorities will have good reason to reject such appeals on the ground that the laws objected to were made by the people's own representatives.

KASIPURNIVASI,  
First fortnight of  
Magh.

40. The *Kasipurnivasi*, for the first fortnight of Magh, says that Government should not wound the feelings of a large number of Hindus and Mussulmans by passing the

The Age of Consent Bill. Age of Consent Bill, when early marriage and Brahmin Kulinism bid fair to disappear of themselves. The followers of all religions should protest against this Bill, seeing that Government, which is now going to interfere with one religion, may at any time interfere with other religions.

#### VI.— MISCELLANEOUS.

SURABHI-O-PATAKA,  
Jan. 23rd, 1891.

41. The *Surabhi-o-Pataká*, of the 23rd January, says that the Lieutenant-Governor has done much good to society by enunciating the Viceroy's and his own views regarding the

Government and the Congress. Congress. Though his utterances on the subject do not show that the Congress is viewed with any great favour, they will still set the public at ease by assuring them that Government is not opposed to the movement. It is to be hoped that those officers who are fighting so hard against the Congress will now cease fighting against it.

SAHACHAR,  
Feb. 4th, 1891.

42. The *Sahachar*, of the 4th February, says that, whether the charges which people bring against Anglo-Indian society are true or not, one thing is certain, namely, that

English society in India. those who carry their heads so high in India, and those Anglo-Indian women who turn away their faces from even Indians of the very highest position, are looked upon by the god-like English public in England as very inferior beings. Simla society is not of course a fair specimen of the whole Anglo-Indian society. But there can be no doubt that whatever good effect hill-residence may have upon the Anglo-Indian's health, it has a decidedly bad effect upon his morals. At Simla a woman is found to spend her time in laughter and merry-making in the company of a man who is not her husband, while her husband is sweating under hard work down in the plains. Liberty, education, and enlightenment



are, it is true, some protection against evil courses. But human beings are frail, and a woman ought to live with her husband. The fact, is the Anglo-Indians disregard native public opinion, and Anglo-Indian women behave just as they please in the presence of their *ayahs* and *khansamas*. A closer intimacy with the native gentry in this country is calculated to inspire Anglo-Indian society with a wholesome dread of public opinion. Fear of public opinion is a guarantee of good behaviour in England, and there is no such guarantee here. Yet it is impossible to agree with the writer in *St. Stephen's Review* on all points. Whatever the case on the hills may be, there are in the plains numerous European women—maids, wives, and widows—who are models of womanly virtue. There is no man whose heart is not filled with reverence at the sight of the ladies of Saint Vincent's Home and kindred institutions. It is, nevertheless, necessary for the higher classes of Anglo-Indians to be more cautious. Everything they do is done, in a manner, under the public eye. Their doings are talked of by their servants in the bazars. The state of things at Simla in Lord Lytton's time was changed after the arrival of Lord Ripon. Lord and Lady Dufferin and Lord Lansdowne and his accomplished wife have changed the aspect of things. But it is to be feared that this change is only on the surface, and if a man like Lord Lytton again comes, the old scenes will be re-enacted. Hill-residence not only causes waste of Indian money, but also engenders political disputes and corrupts Anglo-Indian morality. And it is not an Indian who says this.

43. The *Sudhakar*, of the 6th February, recommends that low class Mussulmans like *jolas*, *hajjams*, *dais*, oilmen, washermen and fishermen should be returned in the census returns as Sheikhs, because all Mussulmans were originally Sheikhs and Sheikhs are by far the most numerous.

SUDHAKAR,  
Feb. 6th, 1891.

44. The *Urdu Guide and Darussaltanat*, of the 6th February, complains that the head of the Southern Division of Behar, who is now on tour, is obtaining his supply of provisions from the zemindars.

URDU GUIDE &  
DARUSSALTANAT,  
Feb. 6th, 1891.

45. The *Samay*, of the 6th February, is glad that Sir Charles Elliott has expressed a desire to consult non-official gentlemen on administrative questions, and to remove his ignorance of the country by making tours, and says that, if His Honour conducts his administration on this principle, he will be able to earn the gratitude of the whole Bengali people. But it is to be feared that tours made under the present system will not enable him to know much.

SAMAY,  
Feb. 6th, 1891.

46. The *Saraswat Patra*, of the 8th February, is glad that Sir Charles Elliott has expressed his desire to acquire a knowledge of the province over which he has been called to rule by making tours and by conversing with the leading men of the country. Such a desire is very natural in those rulers who have the welfare of their subjects at heart.

SARASWAT PATRA,  
Feb. 8th, 1891.

47. The *Gramvasi*, of the 9th February, has the following:—

GRAMVASI,  
Feb. 9th, 1891.

The way in which Sir Charles Elliott has commenced his administration is very hopeful. Even before he took charge of his office he carefully examined the papers of the Secretariat offices. His Honour does not depend on his Secretaries and passes no order on a subject without carefully considering it. The practice which he has introduced of inspecting from time to time the districts and places near the metropolis is certainly a very good one. The writer was present at Gewankholly when His Honour was passing through that place on his way to Midnapore. His Honour landed at that place, and his smiling face reminded him of the smiling face of the noble Lord Ripon. He was glad to see His Honour enquire into the census work and about the lock-gate.

48. The *Kasipur Nivasi*, for the first fortnight of Magh, says that the people of the Burrisal town are alarmed by the howling of wolves within the town. This wolf-scare will not be removed so long as the jungle in the villages adjoining the town is not cleared.

KASIPUR NIVASI,  
First fortnight of  
Magh.

CHUNDER NATH BOSE,  
*Bengali Translator.*

BENGALI TRANSLATOR'S OFFICE,  
The 14th February 1891.



